

# ALBATROS IN RIO: LEADS ON HANDICAP

From Staff Reporter Neil Lurssen

12.2.71 RIO DE JANEIRO, Friday.

**A**LBATROS II, pride of Knysna, sailed over the finish line early today to become the first South African yacht home in the Cape-to-Rio race and the overall leader on handicap — a lead that looks unbeatable.

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The white-hulled sloop, skippered by John Goodwin, crossed the South Atlantic in an actual time of 26 days 13hr. 38min. 22sec.

But her handicapping gave her a corrected time of 22 days 1hr. 33min. 34sec. — nearly six hours faster than the corrected time of the French yacht Striana.

Nearest rivals among the boats still to finish are the three South African entries, Golden City, Breezand and Outburst.

All three of these craft are more than 20 hours behind on handicap and with distances of 150 to 250 miles to go it is virtually impossible for them to make up the leeway.

Although the final results can only be worked out after the rest of the yachts have finished it is almost definite that Albatros II will be declared overall winner.

## Rousing welcome

A group of South Africans, including directors of the Knysna company that owns her, Mr. Stanley Thesen and Mr. Hjalmar Thesen, gave Albatros a rousing welcome.

But the first man to board her was Mr. Jean-Michel Auclair, owner of Striana, the yacht squeezed out of first place overall.

Mr. Auclair leapt to Albatros from the quayside as she moved through the harbour entrance to congratulate Goodwin and his crew — Arthur Holgate, Brian Lello, Hal Thesen, John Allen and John Green.

## Cheers, singing

Earlier, South African supporters, newsmen and film cameramen had cheered and sung from a launch in the bay as their powerful camera light lit up the handsome lines and sails of the yacht soon after she crossed the line.

Back to Rio's yacht club 10 miles away, a siren sounded, club officials brought out beer and champagne and yachtsman Jannie Engelbrecht hoisted a South African flag to its allotted place on the row of flag poles.

For Goodwin and his crew, today's arrival was a victory for determination and skill. Albatros's mast was badly bent shortly after the start on January 16 when she

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broached in the strong wind and lay right over on her side.

'Had it not been such an important race, I would have turned back,' said Goodwin today.

But instead of turning back, Albatros lay off Robben Island while her crew made hasty repairs with block and tackle.

'The mast looked pretty bad and it gave us two anxious weeks before we had it completely right. We did it with our own resources on board,' Goodwin said.

'The race started on the birthday of my son Anthony. I had calculated that we would finish by tomorrow, but we made a special effort to finish today, the birthday of my son Garth,' he said with a smile.

After racing away to the lead and then going through a frustrating period of calms and light winds for some 10 days, Albatros raced home in the last three days, at times reaching 13 knots.

On one stretch between Cape Frio and Rio, she stood out 45 miles to sea to avoid the calm area — Goodwin is familiar with these waters — and hoisted 3 200 square feet of sail to average seven to eight knots.

Goodwin said his decision to take the more direct southerly route — a choice which paid off in spite of the dangers of hitting headwinds and adverse currents — was made three or four days after the start.